THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) According to available information, there have been linkages between Nepal's Maoists and Indian terrorist outfits, particularly the MCC (Maoists Communist Centre) and the PWG (People's War Group). Some CPN (Maoist) activists from Nepal have been detected/arrested while taking shelter in some bordering States of India to evade arrest in Nepal and also while undergoing treatment at Hospitals in UP, Bihar and West Bengal. The Central Government has also banned the PWG, the MCC and the ABNES (Akhil Bhartiya Nepali Ekta Samaj) under POTA, 2002.

Screening Committee to review POTA cases in J&K

1550. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government have advised the Jammu and Kashmir Government to Constitute a Screening Committee to review the POTA cases in the State; and

(b) if so, the details thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) The Central Government has not issued any instructions to the State Government of J&K for setting up of any Screening Committee to review the POTA cases in the State. However, the State Government had as reported by then taken steps in 2001 to place the mechanism on the ground with respect to various safeguards provided in the POTA, which *inter-alia* included declaring the Principal Secretary (Home) as competent authority for the purpose of Section 36 of the Act and Divisional Commissioners as designated authorities relating to the forfeiture and attachment of property and initiating steps for the Review Committee chaired by a retired High Court judge.

Operational autonomy for Central Para-military Forces

1551. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move to restore operational autonomy to Central Para-military Forces which are under army's operational control in some of the States;

(b) if so, the States in which the Central Para-military Forces are working under the Army; and

(c) by when the Para-military Forces will get operational autonomy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (c) The Central Para-military Forces are placed under operational control of the Army only when it is so required in view of the compulsions of prevailing security scenario or developments on border. In order to maintain unity of Command it is not considered appropriate to grant operational autonomy to the Central Para-military Forces while functioning under the Operational Control of the Army. It is not in public interest to divulge further details in this regard.

Non-Brahmins Priest in Temples

†1552. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a division bench of Kerala High Court has pronounced a decision that only Brahmins are not entitled to become Priests in Temples but any qualified non-brahmin who is well versed in traditional rituals and religious rites can be made a priest in a Temple with reference to Article 17 of the Constitution;

(b) if so, whether Central Government propose to implement said decision in Temples, in the country where trustee is the Central Government; and

(c) if so, the details of the policy to be adopted by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is no such proposal under consideration of the Union Government.

Population explosion

†1553. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present population of India and how does it compare

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.